

What I claim as my invention is:

1           1. A method of identifying a bridge uplink port in a network, comprising the steps  
2 of:

3           (a) sending an ICMP ping to all known bridges within said network and thereby  
4 causing forwarding data base tables of said bridges to store MAC addresses and  
5 interface indices of adjacent bridges;

6           (b) sending an SNMP query to a selected bridge to retrieve stored contents of a  
7 forwarding data base table of said selected bridge; and

8           (c) for any interface index retrieved from said selected bridge, identifying a port  
9 associated with said interface index as an uplink port of an adjacent bridge.

1           2. A method of further identifying a bridge uplink port in a network in accordance  
2 with claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

3           (d) downloading the contents of all of said forwarding data base tables of said  
4 known bridges;

5           (e) counting a number of MAC addresses associated with each port of said  
6 bridges; and

7           (f) identifying a port as an uplink port if said number of MAC addresses counted  
8 exceeds a predetermined number.